

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, and 181-189 are pending in this application. Claims 3-180 were withdrawn from consideration in the Office Action mailed December 11, 2002 as having been drawn to a non-elected invention. Applicants hereby cancel claims 3-180 without prejudice or disclaimer in a sincere effort to further prosecution. Applicants reserve the right to pursue these cancelled claims in one or more continuation applications.

Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to further clarify the operation of the decoder recited therein. Claims 181-184 and 185-189 depend from independent claims 1 and 2, respectively, and have been added to more clearly define the scope of the invention. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Mandell *et al.*, US Patent No. 4,799,260 ("*Mandell*"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

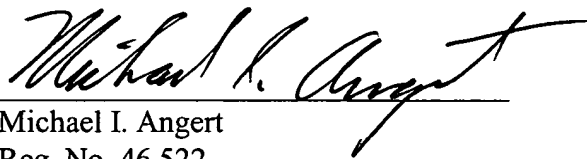
Applicants assert that *Mandell* does not teach or suggest at least a decoder simultaneously receiving a first signal comprising substantially vocal signal information and a second signal comprising substantially information other than the vocal signal information of the first signal, wherein the first signal and the second signal are received separately by the decoder, as recited in independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claim 2. *Mandell* relates to a decoder that decodes at least two channel signals in a directional information system where at least four inputs signals containing directional information have been encoded into the two or more channel signals. *Mandell* Abstract. *Mandell* never discloses that of the two channels, one channel comprises substantially vocal signal information while the other channel comprises substantially information other than the vocal signal information of the first [channel], as recited in independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claim 2. Accordingly, the 35 USC § 102(b) rejection of claims 1 and 2 should be withdrawn.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 2 define patentable subject matter. Claims 181-184 and 185-189 depend from independent claims 1 and 2, respectively, and therefore, also define patentable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants request that the 35 USC § 102(b) rejection of independent claims 1 and 2 be withdrawn.

Applicants assert that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Prompt and favorable examination on the merits is earnestly solicited.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 11-0600. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 202-220-4393 to discuss any matter regarding this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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Version with markings to show changes made.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please substitute the amended claims below for the pending claims with the same claim numbers. The version below shows deletion by strikethrough and insertion by underlining.

1. (Amended) A system for providing ~~multiple~~a users with voice-to-remaining audio (VRA) adjustment capability comprising:

~~a first decoder receiving a voice signal and a remaining audio signal; and~~

a ~~second~~ decoder simultaneously receiving ~~said voice signal and said~~ a first signal comprising substantially vocal signal information and a second signal comprising substantially information other than the vocal signal information of the first signal ~~remaining audio signal~~, wherein ~~said the voice~~ first signal and ~~said the remaining audio~~ second signal are received separately by ~~said the first and second decoder and are separately adjusted.~~

2. (Amended) A method of providing ~~multiple~~a users with voice-to-remaining audio (VRA) adjustment capability comprising:

receiving at a first decoder a ~~voice~~ first signal comprising substantially vocal signal information; and a remaining audio signal and

simultaneously receiving at ~~a the second decoder, said voice signal and said~~ a second signal comprising substantially information other than the vocal signal information of the first signal ~~remaining audio signal~~, wherein ~~said the voice~~ first signal and ~~said the remaining audio~~ second signal are received separately by the decoder; ~~and~~
~~separately adjusting by each of said decoders, said separately received voice and remaining audio signals.~~